

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A computer-implemented method of generating an information
2 disclosure statement comprising:

- 3 (a) receiving a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic
4 document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a patent
5 office, the reference information including IDS information; and
6 (b) associating the IDS information with an electronic information disclosure
7 statement.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing the IDS
2 information in the electronic information disclosure statement.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing a plurality
2 of pointers in the electronic information disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer
3 corresponds to an electronic document.

4 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
5 receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to
6 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;
7 extracting the IDS information from each electronic document corresponding
to the plurality of pointers; and
transmitting the IDS information from each electronic document
corresponding to the plurality of pointers to the patent office.

1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising extracting IDS information
2 from the reference information.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the IDS information is extracted from
2 the reference information automatically in response to the signal.

1 7 The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a prompt to the
2 user for generating the signal.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a field in a
2 mouse pop-up window.

1 9. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises an electronic
2 button.

1 10. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a computer
2 screen icon.

1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is downloaded
2 from a database coupled to a computer network.

1 12. The method of claim 1 further comprising saving the electronic
2 information disclosure statement in a database.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a local database
2 coupled to a local computer network.

1 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a remote database
2 coupled to the internet.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing access to the
2 electronic information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.

1 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising prompting the user for an
2 access code when the user requests access to the electronic information disclosure statement,
3 wherein when the correct code is provided by the user, the user may access the electronic
4 information disclosure statement, and when the correct code is not provided by the user, the
5 user may not access the electronic information disclosure statement.

1 17. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user with
2 instructions on when an electronic document is to be disclosed to a patent office.

1 18. The method of claim 1 further comprising electronically transmitting
2 the electronic information disclosure statement to a patent office.

1 19. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2 receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to
3 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;
4 and

electronically transmitting the electronic information disclosure statement to the patent office contemporaneously with the patent application.

20. The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically generating a letter to third party in a foreign country when the electronic information disclosure statement is filed in a patent office, the letter including a portion of the IDS information in the electronic information disclosure statement.

21. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an electronic version of a United States Patent.

22. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an electronic version of a foreign patent document.

23. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an electronic version of a publication.

24. A computer system comprising:

(a) a computer processor;

(b) a computer-readable memory, coupled to said computer processor, said computer-readable memory including computer instructions to:

- (i) receive a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a patent office, the reference information including IDS information; and

- (ii) associate the IDS information with an electronic information disclosure statement.

25. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to associate includes instructions to store the IDS information in the electronic information disclosure statement.

26. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to associate includes instructions to store a plurality of pointers in the electronic information disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer corresponds to an electronic document.

1 27. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to extract the IDS information from the
3 reference information.

1 28. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted automatically with one mouse-click.

1 29. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted automatically by parsing the reference information.

1 30. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted using a pop-up menu system.

1 31. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide a prompt to the user for generating
3 the signal.

1 32. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to save the electronic information disclosure
3 statement in a database.

1 33. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide access to the electronic
3 information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.